

Examples of Motions and Procedures under Roberts Rules of Order
Model Constitutional Convention
Arizona State University

In both the committee and plenary sessions, students will follow Roberts Rules of Order in proposing and voting on amendments to the United States Constitution. In the case of the committees, the Chair will preside over the deliberations. In the case of the plenary sessions, the President will preside. All motions and remarks must be addressed to the Chair or the President, depending on the context (committee or plenary).

If a student wishes to move that the committee or plenary membership consider an amendment for adoption, the dialogue will proceed as follows.

The Main Motion:

Student Delegate (standing in the plenary session): (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I, [name] and delegate of the great state of [state], move that the Convention membership adopt an amendment to the United States Constitution that reads as follows: [read the amendment.]

Presiding Officer: The delegate from [state] has made a motion. Is there a second?

If there is no second, the **Presiding Officer** will say: The motion dies for lack of a second.

Presiding Officer: It is moved and seconded to adopt the motion that is currently displayed. Is there any debate? If you choose to address the motion, please rise and be recognized. [The President will identify speakers, others will sit until recognized.]

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I rise to offer support for the motion or I rise in favor or opposed to this motion. [This statement may take up to two minutes. If the delegate uses less time, he or she may not “yield back” the remaining time to the original mover or to another delegate. All statements will be directed to the presiding officer.]

Presiding Officer: The [chair, president] recognizes the delegate from [state] for two minutes.

Delegates may speak twice on a proposal, but the second time only after all others who seek to debate have had a chance to speak at least once.

Motion to Amend the Proposal:

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I move that the pending proposal be amended “by striking the words”, “by inserting the words”, “by striking the words _____ and inserting the words _____”

Presiding Officer: The delegate from [state] has made a motion to amend the proposal. Is there a second?

Presiding Officer: (If motion to amend has been seconded): The motion has been seconded. Is there any debate on the amendment? [Follow procedure for recognizing delegates on the floor, with discussion limited to the amendment only.] [Amendment must be germane to the original proposal]

Presiding Officer: (Following debate on amendment): Seeing no further discussion, the delegates will now vote on the amendment as displayed. The amendment requires a majority vote.

When the amendment is disposed of, discussion may continue on the original motion as amended. Other amendments may be proposed provided that they do not alter or nullify language in amendments already passed. The final vote on the motion will then be a vote on the “motion as amended.”

Previous Question or Calling the Question

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I move to call for the previous question [ends debate] on “the motion at hand” or “or all pending motions.”

Presiding Officer: The delegate from [state] has made a motion to end debate on the proposal or call for the previous question. Is there a second?

Presiding Officer: (If motion has been seconded): The motion has been seconded. All those in favor of calling the previous question or ending debate please rise! [pause] Be Seated! Those opposed to calling the previous question please rise! [pause] There are more than/less than two-thirds in the affirmative and we will/will not call the previous question. [if adopted proceed to the vote on the underlying proposal] [if not adopted return to the debate on the motion.]

Presiding Officer: (Following debate on amendment): Seeing no further discussion, the delegates will now vote on the amendment as displayed. The amendment requires a majority vote.

Point of Order

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I rise to a point of order

Presiding Officer: The delegate will state their Point of Order. What rule has been broken?

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [States the violation or perceived violation that has occurred?

Presiding Officer: [Makes a ruling on the matter usually with the consultation of the parliamentarian]

Appeal

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [After a ruling by the chair] I appeal the decision of the chair.

Presiding Officer: Is there a second?

If there is no second, the **Presiding Officer** will say: The motion dies for lack of a second.

Presiding Officer: The decision of the chair has been appealed from. The chair's decision was that _____. The question is Shall the decision of the chair be sustained? The chair is allowed to freely debate this motion without yielding the presiding officer position both first and last. [debates first and then handle debate. At the conclusion of debate, the chair debates again if they desire]

Presiding Officer: The question is on sustaining the decision of the chair. The chair's decision was _____. Those in favor of sustaining or upholding the decision of the chair say Aye! [pause] Those opposed say no! [pause] The ayes/nos have it and the chair's decision is/is not sustained. [States the outcome]

Parliamentary Inquiry

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [without being recognized] I rise to a parliamentary inquiry!

Presiding Officer: The delegate will state their inquiry.

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [Asks a question about the rules or procedure or how to accomplish a procedural outcome.] Does that answer the delegates question?

Presiding Officer: [Answer the question]

Request for Information

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [without being recognized] I rise to a request for information!

Presiding Officer: The delegate will state their request.

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [Asks a question about non parliamentary items or seeks other information]

Presiding Officer: [Answers the question if the information is known] Does that answer the delegates question?

Division of the Assembly

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [after a voice vote only] [without being recognized] Division!

Presiding Officer: The delegate will state their request.

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), [Asks a question about non parliamentary items or seeks other information]

Presiding Officer: [Answers the question if the information is known.] Does that answer the delegates question?

Adopt in Lieu Of

Student Delegate (standing in the plenary session): (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I, [name] and delegate of the great state of [state], move that the Convention membership adopt an amendment to the United States Constitution that reads as follows and labeled #1: [read the amendment.] in lieu of those proposals labeled 3 and 4 on the same general topic.

Presiding Officer: The delegate from [state] has made a motion. Is there a second?

If there is no second, the **Presiding Officer** will say: The motion dies for lack of a second.

Presiding Officer: It is moved and seconded to adopt the motion that is currently displayed labeled as #1 in lieu of proposals 3 and 4. Is there any debate? If you choose to address the motion, please rise and be recognized. [The President will identify speakers, others will sit until recognized.]

Student Delegate: (Mr. President, Madame President, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman), I rise to offer support for the motion or I rise in favor or opposed to this motion.. [This statement may take up to two minutes. If the delegate uses less time, he or she may not “yield back” the remaining time to the original mover or to another delegate. All statements will be directed to the presiding officer.]

Presiding Officer: The [chair, president] recognizes the delegate from [state] for two minutes.

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